THE ECONOMICS OF AUTHORSHIP, By Elmer Davis

The Saturday Review of Literature

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THE BOOK AMERICA WROTE
An Article
By Edward M. Brecher

"OLIVER WISWELL"
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Reviewed by Allan Nevins

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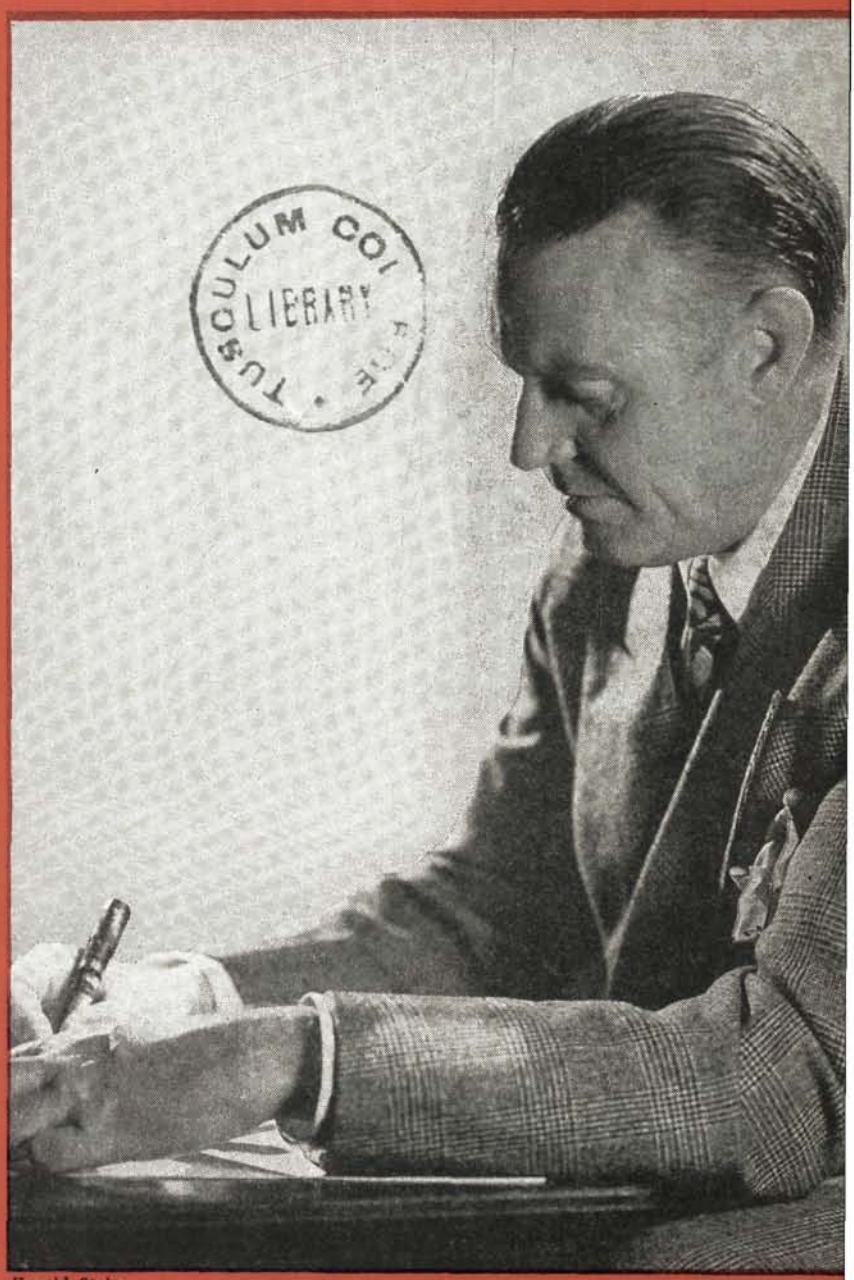

Harold Stein

KENNETH ROBERTS "has a faculty for enlisting the reader in the ardors of some embattled body of men . . ." ***(See page 5)***

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The Saturday Review of Literature

The Economics of Authorship

ELMER DAVIS

WHY do people become authors? Seldom, certainly, in hope of gain; nor very often in the pursuit of glory. The publicity value attached to successful authorship is attractive to a certain type, a type to which unfortunately many successful authors belong; but many whose ambitions aim primarily at that reward have found that it can far more easily be attained by impersonations of successful, and sufficiently distant, authors, than by doing any writing themselves. What this has cost many authors in money and in unfavorable publicity is a considerable item, but it has to be accepted as one of the occupational hazards.

Nor, contrary to tradition, do many people become authors simply to while away their leisure time, dashing off a book while convalescing from an operation. It has often been attempted; but so far as I know it has been attempted successfully only in the single case of Margaret Ayer Barnes. Which means, I suspect, that Mrs. Barnes had always had not only the talent but the impulse, and that a stay in a hospital merely happened to be the first occasion in a crowded life when she had time to get around to it. No, most people become authors either because they have something to say or because they think they have something to say. Regrettably, the latter case is far more frequent; and perhaps it is regrettable, too, that the organization of the literature industry in the United States gives too many of these people a hearing. That however is a debatable point; it can be argued that mass production of literature, while it results in the publication of a great deal that can most politely be described as ephemeral, does result in the production of more good stuff than people would ever get around to writing if they had not had a reasonable hope of making some money out of it.

But the most regrettable case of all, which unfortunately is far too common in this country, is that of the man who has something to say, but not much. He says it, he acquires a certain degree of renown, or at least notoriety; he may even make some money out of it; if he has a fairly sustained capacity for production he becomes a professional writer—and all at once he discovers that he has nothing more to say, that he said it all in his first two or three books; but he is still a professional writer, with a family which has to be supported somehow. This all too common situation has had a serious effect on the content and quality of American writing.

There are three ways in which an author may support himself and his family—for authors are in the habit of having families, indeed a great many of them have two or three families, and have to put down alimony as the first item in the budget. And these are the three ways—the author may support himself by his writing; or he may have a job, and write in his spare time; or he may have so much money, either by inheritance or by marriage, that he need not worry about the financial return from his labors, but can conscientiously devote himself to doing the best work that he can. Theoretically, this last should be the ideal situation; practically it doesn't always work out that way. David Cohn, in his "I'm a Literary Sharecropper," recently published in this periodical, mentions Tolstoy and Proust as writers who had plenty of money and were thus able to devote themselves single-mindedly to doing the best work they could. No one, I think, could reasonably claim that either of them was harmed in any way by being freed from money worries; but in this country there are one or two cases—to name them would be invidious, since this is a conjectural diagnosis—of very considerable talents which have never produced the sort of work that might have been expected; and which possibly failed to go as deep as they should, to get the rounded picture that would have made their work really first-rate instead of top flight second-rate, because those writers never knew what it was like to wonder where your next meal was coming from, or what your family would live on if you died suddenly. To large areas of human experience and emotion these writers were blank; and good as they were, they were not good enough—as Tolstoy was—to fill the gap by the intuition of genius.

SO this economic solution is not always as satisfactory as it seems; and in any case it is available to very few authors. A good deal of good writing has been produced by authors who had jobs, in their spare time; but that implies a job that is not too exacting. The British civil service used to provide such jobs, yet most of the good writing in England was done either by men of means or by men who made a living out of what they wrote; and most jobs in this country are apt to leave a man too tired to do very good work after his day's work is over—especially as the jobs most congenial to people with a bent for writing are apt to be writing jobs, which leave a man tired of writing by dinner time, and not in the best condition to begin writing what he lovingly regards as his good stuff, after dinner. Some shrewd writers, recognizing this, have deliberately selected jobs as far from writing as possible; the early novels of Mr. Elliot Paul—very good novels, too—were written in the evening after he had finished his day's work as a plumber; and I know a playwright of promise who, having to earn his living this summer, got himself a job as a stone mason rather than take a desk in a publicity office. But again, few authors have the

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aptitude and training needed by stone masons or plumbers. Most of the after-hour writing is probably done by newspapermen—or by teachers, whose job with its long summer vacation looks as if it ought to be ideal for the writer. Sometimes it has proved so, but more often in the old days than now. Professor Longfellow became a best seller in his spare time at Harvard, and Professor Moody wrote some excellent plays in his spare time at Chicago. But in those days the pressure of academic demands for academic production was less intense; nowadays the young assistant professor with an idea for a novel which might give him something of a reputation, but is unlikely to bring him in very much money, is apt to find that his prospects of supporting his family are better if he spends the summer annotating the novels of some forgotten writer of the past—the well-known writers of the past having already been pretty well annotated to death—than if he wrote a novel of his own which his academic superiors would be unlikely to regard as an original contribution to human knowledge.

Schoolteachers, if under less pressure to produce, are nowadays under an increasing pressure to absorb; continuance in their jobs usually requires that they spend their summers acquiring more credits at some teachers college. So not many of them any more can follow the example of Mathilde Eiker, whose excellent and never adequately recognized novels were written in her vacations from her work as a high-school teacher. Most of us have to begin by writing in spare time while we live on a job; but almost all of us have found, if we attained any success as writers, that sooner or later we had to quit the job or quit writing.

WHICH brings us to the author who makes a living by his trade; and who usually finds after a few years that he must make a choice between quantity and quality, or—more deplorably still—that there is no choice that quantity is all he is any longer capable of producing. For this condition no one can be blamed; and, as observed earlier, it may be argued that it produces a larger amount of good writing, absolutely if not relative to the total mass, than would be turned out if it were not for the prospects of opulence that the magazines and the movies hold out to writers who happen to be able to produce the sort of thing that these markets demand. Nevertheless it cannot be disputed that the conditions of the industry today do encourage an enormous over-production, do make it practically impossible for a writer to retire into dignified silence when he has said all he has to say, or to lie fallow for a while if he is going through a period of sterility. He can still do this, of course, if he has sufficient fortitude not only to starve and to see his family starve, but to resist the importunities of his friends in the magazine business who tell him they are counting on him for some more stories; but few authors have such hardihood.

I DOUBT if authors ever enjoyed starving. Shakespeare, no doubt, wrote because he wanted to write; but whether he would have kept it up if all he had got out of it was a crust of bread in a garret is open to some doubt. At any rate he made a great deal of money out of it, for his time—enough money to enjoy a luxury beyond the means of most authors, the luxury of being able to quit when he was through. It must be added, however, that one of the surest proofs of Shakespeare's genius, something that sets him apart from the overwhelming majority of authors of his own time or any other, is that he knew when he was through and had sense enough to quit; instead of keeping on to the end of his life, as some other writers of originally high ability have done, pouring out a continual flood of work of continually poorer quality.

At any rate starvation in a garret is no longer a problem for any writer who can meet the somewhat peculiar but not too rigidly specialized standards of the magazine market. The very editor whom I just now quoted on the merits (for other people) of a crust of bread in a garret, showed his recognition of changed conditions in a most singular conversation which he had, about the year 1928, with a very popular woman writer who had just sold him a serial. He proposed to pay her sixty-five thousand dollars for it; and she said—this I believe is unique in the annals of American literature, and probably of any literature at any time—she said, "Mr. So-and-So, it isn't worth it. It isn't worth more than fifty thousand." Whereupon he replied that the question of how much it was worth was irrelevant and immaterial; that he owed it to his position, and to hers, in the literature industry to pay her sixty-five thousand; that for him to offer or for her to accept so paltry a sum as fifty thousand would mean a loss of face, a degradation. P.S.—she took the sixty-five thousand.

That of course was a long time ago; fifty thousand dollars is no longer contemptible money for any serial writer; indeed there were not many who could get that much, even in the Golden Age. Nevertheless the incident illustrates the inflation that has been created by the growth of the magazine industry, an inflation which

(*Continued on page* 15)

THIS WEEK

Articles

PAGE

THE ECONOMICS OF AUTHORSHIP
By Elmer Davis 3

THE BOOK AMERICA WROTE
By Edward M. Brecher 11

Reviews

OLIVER WISWELL
By Kenneth Roberts
Reviewed by Allan Nevins 5

FAME IS THE SPUR
By Howard Spring
Reviewed by George Dangerfield 7

FOREIGN DEVILS IN THE FLOWERY KINGDOM
By Carl Crow
Reviewed by Pearl S. Buck 8

THE TIDE OF FORTUNE
By Stefan Zweig
Reviewed by William Henry Chamberlin 10

WHO WALK ALONE
By Perry Burgess
Reviewed by Charlton Ogburn, Jr. 10

A TREASURY OF AMERICAN SONG
By Olin Downes and Elie Siegmeister
Reviewed by Heinz Norden 13

HORACE WALPOLE
By R. W. Ketton-Cremer
Reviewed by Leonard Bacon 14

TORCHBEARER OF THE REVOLUTION
By Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker
Reviewed by H. J. Eckenrode 17

FABLES FOR OUR TIME
By James Thurber
Reviewed by Fred Schwed, Jr. 17

PISTOLS AT TEN PACES
By William Oliver Stevens
Reviewed by Albert Neville 18

ZERO HOUR: A SUMMONS TO THE FREE
By Six Authors
Reviewed by Henry B. Kranz 19

Departments

EDITORIAL 6
YOUR LITERARY I.Q. 8
LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 9
THE CRIMINAL RECORD 20
THE NEW BOOKS 20
AUTHOR, AUTHOR! 21
DOUBLE-CROSTICS: No. 348 23
TRADE WINDS 24

NEXT WEEK

AN ANSWER TO BURTON RASCOE'S "WHAT'S WRONG WITH PUBLISHERS!"

By Raymond T. Bond

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Young Man in A Revolution

OLIVER WISWELL. By Kenneth Roberts. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1940. 836 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ALLAN NEVINS

Grant Wood executed this painting for the jacket of Kenneth Roberts's new book, "Oliver Wiswell."

IT all began on the night of April 17, 1775. Oliver Wiswell, twenty-two, conservative son of a Massachusetts attorney, when riding from Yale to the bedside of his stricken father at Milton Hill, saw a mob burning the barn of a Tory neighbor, mutilating his horses, and splitting a tarred and feathered man on a rail. Young Wiswell risked his life to save the wretch. He detested the selfish demagogues and the excited rabble behind them who were filling the land with disorder and hatred. But he had barely seen his half-dead father, talked with his sweetheart, and learned how far the embezzler Sam Adams and the smuggler Hancock were pushing matters, before the muskets rattled at Concord, the countryside rose, and he and other lovers of peace and order were driven inside Boston. It was the beginning of eight years of blood, sweat, and tears, American turned against American, Briton against Briton. Patriots called it a glorious revolution, and were repaid by a victory which some had earned and many had not. The loyalists called it civil war, and found the cup bitter to the last drop.

The eight tumultuous years, from Lexington to Yorktown, are all here. Like "Northwest Passage" and unlike "Arundel," this long novel comprehends an era and an epic cycle of action. The scene shifts from point to point—Boston, refugee-filled Halifax, London, Paris and its intriguers, the Southern colonies as Greene and Cornwallis fought across the ravaged map. Historic characters, drawn with sententious distinctness, appear in dozens. They include the stiff, incompetent commanders Gage, Howe, and Clinton; the sadistic Irishman Cunningham who as quartermaster and jailer coined money out of misery; the upright loyalists Hutchinson, Galloway, Danield Leonard, and Copley; citizens of two worlds like that elegant and ingenious Benjamin Thompson who became Count Rumford; Germaine, embodiment of the stupidity of British bureaucracy; that "benevolent old rebel with mistresses up alleys," Benjamin Franklin in Paris; and numerous others of note until the panorama ends on the shores of Nova Scotia.

The book is full also of fine historical scenes, executed with bravura and accuracy—the butchery on Bunker Hill, described far more excitingly than Cooper did it in "Lionel Lincoln"; the siege of Boston; the battle of Long Island and the pursuit of the fleeing Americans across the Harlem; the defense of Ninety-Six by the loyalists; New York as Arnold and Clinton debated ways of ending a war that even in 1781 might have been won by Britain. History is no mere background in this book. It is the warp and woof of the novel, in which little is invented except the hero, the conversations, and the love story.

It is a book which celebrates loyalty to the noblest traditions of the crown and the Empire. Yet it is an American book through and through. The heroes are the fine loyalist figures like Hutchinson, Galloway, and Stedman, who clung to a great ideal despite the outrageous violence of the patriots and the blind treachery of royal placemen. Oliver Wiswell represents the younger generation among a propertied and cultured group of Americans, men of character and vision, who stood midway between the extremes of radicalism and of reaction. It was his hope to make America a place fit for "such worthy patriots as Hutchinson and Oliver, Chipman and Saltonstall, Curwen and Judge Sewall, Faneuil and Waldo"; the Americans who ought to be ruling a New World dominion. They loved peace, these loyalists, but they were as good fighters as Washington's best. It was one of the tragedies of the war that they received so few chances to distinguish themselves. Given full scope and a Wolfe or Clive to lead them, the King's Rangers, the Queen's Rangers, the New York Volunteers, the Bucks County Light Dragoons, the Pennsylvania Loyalists, the Royal Fencibles, and all the other American regiments might have done much to bring the conflict to a different termination. On various fields, and nowhere more than at Ninety-Six, they left an enduring mark upon history. The climax of the book is the story of the heroic defence of this post in the uplands of South Carolina, where Cruger and his mixed force of loyalists and redcoats defeated more than three times their number under Greene.

Once more Mr. Roberts proves that his best talents lie in the swift narration of some tale of heroic exertions or resistances. Nobody better than he can bring a battle, a siege, a toilsome march, a wrestle with overmastering moral and material forces, vividly before us. He has a fine power of visualization, an even finer faculty for enlisting the reader in the ardors and endurances of some embattled body of men. When it comes to the presentation of gentler scenes, whether in drawing-rooms, courts, or congresses, he is much less effective. Nor is he skilled in the integration of a far-reaching and highly varied piece of fiction. His "Northwest Passage" broke squarely in two, while this book has a sprawling quality which results in thin and unconvincing passages. His scenes in Paris and perhaps even in London might better have been left out. The picture of Ninety-Six and its defence during midsummer days when the rebels made it a very hell no reader will ever forget. In this episode Mr. Roberts has very nearly achieved again what he did in describing Robert Rogers's march on St. Francis and his extrication of his men from appalling perils afterward.

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A NEW CONSTITUTIONAL AMENDMENT?

THE following letter has been sent by the editors of The Saturday Review *to the member of the House of Representatives elected from the district in which the offices of the magazine are located, and to the two Senators from the State of New York. In publishing this letter, the editors realize that it is not the function of this magazine to editorialize on matters outside the world of books. But we ask the indulgence of our readers, in temporarily leaving our regular orbit, in order to give expression to several ideas which grew out of the recent Presidential election. Elsewhere on this page we publish a form on which we earnestly hope readers will state their views concerning the proposal discussed in the letter.*

Dear Mr. Congressman:

Most people would be surprised to learn that the defeated candidate for the Presidency would be regarded by the framers of the Constitution as the rightful claimant to the office of Vice-President. For example, under the terms of the Constitution as originally written, Mr. Wendell Willkie would be inaugurated as Vice-President on January 20, 1941.

This is no interpretation; it is a fact. Historians and students of the Constitutional Convention agree that the Founding Fathers intended, and indeed specified, that the second highest office in the land be filled by the candidate for the Presidency who received the second highest number of electoral votes. The source for this information may be found in the minutes of the Constitutional debates, and in the 1787 Constitution itself, which said: "In every case, after the choice of the President, the person having the greatest number of votes of the electors shall be the Vice-President." Each elector was to vote for two men who he felt were qualified to fill the Presidency. When the votes were totaled, the candidate who received a majority was to become President, the runner-up Vice-President.

Of all the issues and arguments which generated so much heat and fury during the making of the Constitution, this provision encountered less opposition than any other. William Bennett Munro, of Harvard, in his standard work, "The Government of the United States," says that "almost every other provision of the Constitution was assailed by some one; but this one seems to have drawn no serious criticism."

The plan functioned smoothly during the first few elections. For example, George Washington and John Adams received the highest number of votes, respectively, for the Presidency, giving the former that office, and the latter the office of Vice-President. Eight years later, John Adams again ran for the Presidency, this time against Thomas Jefferson; Adams received the greater number of votes, and Jefferson, as runner-up, became Vice-President. In this election, however, it was known in advance that certain of the electors would vote for Adams and certain for Jefferson. Thus began the "committed electoral vote" custom which prevails today.

But the practice of awarding the Vice-Presidency to the runner-up for the Presidency hit a snag during this country's fourth Presidential election. The candidates in 1800 were put forward by political parties, then making their introduction, and electors had to give advance assurance that their top Presidential preferences would go to two men belonging to the same party, in order that the Vice-Presidency be held by a candidate flying the same party colors as the President. Thus "tickets" were formed in 1800 with Jefferson and Burr the victorious candidates over Adams and Pinckney.

As intended by the Founding Fathers, Adams would have again become Vice-President, the same position he held under Washington. But the Founding Fathers did not foresee the rise of the two-party system. To be sure, they wanted differences of opinion in government, but these differences were to be represented by men, and not necessarily by parties or even groups of men.

This led in 1804 to the twelfth amendment to the Constitution, legally enabling electors to designate their choice for President and Vice-President respectively.

So that in little more than a decade the provision to have the runner-up for the Presidency in the Vice-President's chair had gone by the board. This was not done deliberately, or because the country had decided that the losing candidate should be outside the government; it was done by indirection; one might say it was lost in the shuffle which saw the emergence of the two-party system.

And yet there are advantages in the plan of the framers of the Constitution to place the losing Presidential candidate in a high official position. These advantages are perhaps even more discernible today than they were at the end of the eighteenth century. For one thing, such a plan takes strongly into consideration the welfare of the minority party. It removes the "all-or-nothing" aspect from Presidential elections, and enables the minority to have among its representatives in the government a person who it had felt was qualified to hold the highest elective office in the land.

Most believers in a democratic form of government agree that at the heart of such a government are these essentials: majority rule, preservation of minority rights. What totalitarian countries have in common as a point of departure from democracy is abolition of minority rights. Accordingly, in speculating about the future of democracy it must be remembered that we must be just as careful to protect minority rights as we are not to frustrate majority rule. This delicate balance gives democratic substance to democratic form.

What we are about to suggest is in no sense a guarantee that this delicate balance can be preserved. But we think—and we hope it does not seem presumptuous—that this is a step in the right direction. Actually, this suggestion may mean very little in the ultimate destiny of democracy, but it is certainly in keeping with democratic spirit, especially as that spirit is reflected in the acts and intentions of the men who founded this government.

What we suggest is that the people of the United States be enabled to elect, if they so wish, the unsuccessful candidate for the Presidency to the office of Senator-at-large, with all the rights and privileges thereof. This would not be a separate election; it could and in fact should be done at the same time the Presidential ballot is marked. The proposition could be in the form of a "yes" or "no" answer to the question: "Are you willing that the defeated candidate serve in the Congress as Senator-at-large?"

If the choice of a Senator-at-large

☐ I would ☐ I would not } favor a Constitutional amendment which would enable me, when casting my Presidential ballot, to vote "yes" or "no" concerning my willingness to have the defeated candidate for the Presidency become Senator-at-large with the rights privileges thereof.

(Answer Optional)

☐ In the last election I voted Democratic.
☐ In the last election I voted Republican.

.....

(Name Optional)

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were to be made after the results of the election were known, it is possible that supporters of the winning candidate, in the flush of victory or in the bitterness left by a strenuous political campaign, might vote against sending the losing candidate to the Senate. But when done at a time when the identity of the victor is in doubt, supporters of each nominee might welcome the opportunity of at least assuring themselves that, come what may, their candidate will have a voice in the affairs of the government.

The duties of the Senator-at-large would be the same as those of any Senator, with the principal exception that his constituency would not be restricted to a single state. A somewhat similar precedent already exists in the House of Representatives, where a number of members are "Congressmen-at-large" from various states.

Since the election, there has been talk of the advisability of a cabinet post for the Republican candidate. In this case, the voice of the minority might be weakened or handicapped if its representative became part of the official family of the majority party, subject to dismissal, of course, at the pleasure of the head of that party. As Senator-at-large, however, he would be freed of possible politically-embarrassing situations; there would be no compromising his independent and vigorous conduct of the minority opposition.

This plan, it should be emphasized, did not originate out of an effort to provide the present leader of the Republican Party with an official job. Even if adopted as a Constitutional amendment, it could not possibly be put into effect before 1944, if indeed then. On the other hand, the present situation does dramatize the need for such an amendment: approximately 22,000,000 people have expressed their preference for the losing candidate. Is it not fair to suggest that this candidate, as leader of the minority, ought at least to have a voice in the government on a par with members of Congress whose popular support is in the thousands? Is it not fair to suggest that leadership of the minority opposition be conducted as part of the official business of running the country, and not as a peripheral operation, as it is now? In the same manner, is it not fair to suggest that the President, had he failed of reëlection, ought at least to have had a continuing official voice in the affairs of this country? Historians have frequently commented on the failure of our democracy to avail itself of the services and experience of outgoing presidents. Would not such a plan achieve this objective?

Without getting too deeply involved in details, it is obvious that multiple factors are to be considered. What, for example, would the relation of the Senator-at-large be to the Senate minority leader? Since the Senator-at-large would hold the ninety-seventh vote, would this compromise the power of the Vice-President in holding the deciding vote in event of a deadlock? What would the public reaction be to the matter of losing a capable Senator-at-large—if he had so proved himself—on the occasion of a new Presidential election in which he is not a candidate?

The answers to these questions may or may not be favorable to this plan. At any rate, Mr. Congressman, we earnestly invite your opinion, and, contingent upon that, your support in associating yourself with such a measure by introducing it.

One last word: we should like to emphasize again that this idea is not truly our own; its general purposes and objectives were stated clearly and convincingly as long ago as 1787. And we can read all about it in the Constitution.

Sincerely,

NORMAN COUSINS,
For the Editors.

H. Shawcross, Labor Politician

FAME IS THE SPUR. By Howard Spring. New York: The Viking Press. 1940. 726 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by GEORGE DANGERFIELD

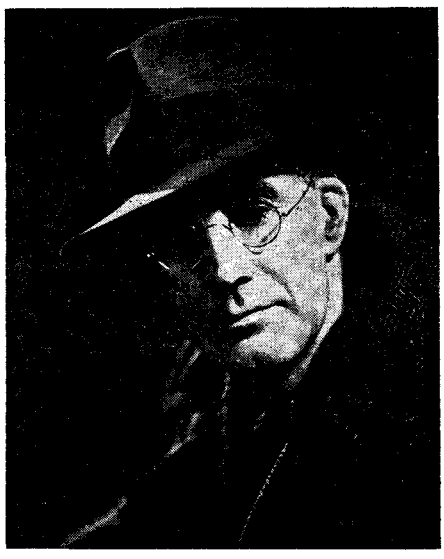
HOWARD SPRING is an agreeable and facile writer. Sentences, paragraphs, pages — they flow from him in a steady and shallow procession. Sometimes, of course, because he is able to make pleasant combinations of words, a sentence or a paragraph or a page will stay in the mind: a description of Welsh hills, the death of a miner, a glowing characterization, a funeral. Mr. Spring is not only a facile writer; he is, on occasion, a decorative one.

There is, however, an energy in what he writes. He has the gift of story-telling. He knows how to pace his incidents and his dialogue; it is probably more a question of instinct than of art; but everything moves forward, and nothing stops or strays. In short, when Mr. Spring writes a novel, he is able to make us keep turning the pages in order to find out what is going to happen next. We do not, it is true, turn the pages in order to find out what is going to happen next to *ourselves* (an experience we can get from such a book as "For Whom the Bell Tolls," which is good story-telling and something more); that is because we acquiese in Mr. Spring's characters, but are rarely involved in them.

In "Fame Is the Spur," he tells of the triumph and disillusionment of a labor politician—a man whose life is, to a certain extent, patterned upon that of the late Ramsay MacDonald. Hamer Shawcross was brought up by his stepfather, a lay preacher and an artisan of Manchester. He had a happy and on the whole a comfortable childhood, though he liked in after years to say that he had known real want. He was consumed with ambition; he brought his ambition to the labor movement; and his ambition always came first. Without being aware of it, he used his mother, his wife, his friends, and his colleagues in the furtherance of his own ends. He had also the fatal gift, not uncommon in men whose ambitions outrun their convictions, of being able to see both sides of a question. In 1910, he turned against the suffragette movement; in 1914, he played quite inevitably a small part in the collapse of the Second International; and, as a Cabinet Minister with a taste for good living and the means with which to indulge it, he helped to break the Labor Party in the days of the National Government. He finished his career in the House of Lords.

The character of Hamer Shawcross is well and shrewdly organized; but I doubt if it could be called organic.

(*Continued on page* 19)



"When Howard Spring writes a novel he is able to keep us turning the pages . . ."

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The Old China Hand

FOREIGN DEVILS IN THE FLOWERY KINGDOM. By Carl Crow. New York: Harper & Bros. 1940. 340 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by PEARL S. BUCK

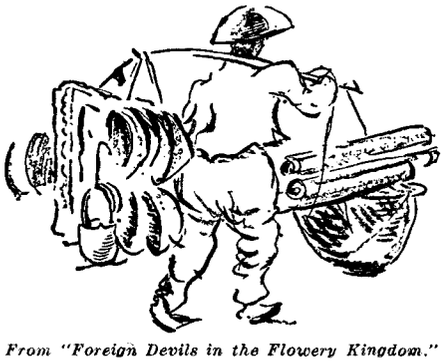
THE Old China Hand was a well-known figure of a China that will be no more. He was a mixture of a person—shrewd, opinionated, salty, humorous, full of tall tales of experiences almost as tall. He knew a great deal about one of the many Chinas there are to know and nothing at all about others; indeed, refused to believe that there was any other than the one he knew. He had lived so long in his China, where his credit was always good merely because he was a white man and service was worshipful and cheap, that he was forever spoiled for any other part of the world in any other kind of life. Away from his haunts in the ports of China he was a creature lost and helpless. But in his haunts he was lord of the domain.

He hated missionaries and kept alive every tale ever told about them. He despised their converts and refused to have any Chinese Christian in his employ on the ground that if a Chinese were a Christian he knew he could not be trusted. He was, that Old China Hand, a one-hundred-percent imperialist, and he believed in the invincible superiority of the white man over all other races and especially the yellow race. He often had Chinese mistresses, and sometimes even a Chinese wife, but he was superior just the same. He carried on most of the trade of the West with the East, and in his own way was honest and courageous and loved the Chinese people and was generous to servants and beggars and to all in his employ. He was fully aware of his own colorfulness and of the extraordinary life he led and made the most of both himself and his life to anyone who would listen to him, and although he could and did revile the Chinese himself, he was savage to any one else who did so. In short, the Old China Hand was one of the staunchest truest friends the Chinese people ever had, though young China hated him and damned him as "die-hard," and it is true there is no more place for him on this earth, for the China he loved and helped to make is gone, and he can live nowhere else.

His story Carl Crow has written in his new book, "Foreign Devils in the Flowery Kingdom." It is a delightful book, written in the plain man-to-man fashion which brings author and reader together and makes all that is told real and believable. Carl Crow loves his China honestly and knows it well and portrays it truly. He has seen many Chinese in the world of work and everyday business and that is to see them at their most real and their least pretentious. He lived in that world with them and did business with them, and this book is in some ways his own story, as it is the story of all European and English and American business men in China.

It is a fascinating, vivid story, in which Chinese take their part as friendly enemies of the white man, admiring and contemptuous at the same time of the swashbuckling, free-ly-spending barbarians. It really is the gold-coast atmosphere, as Carl Crow says.

No one else can portray it so well as he. He lived in it and was of it. Carl Crow calls himself an Old China Hand and so he is. But he is a good deal more or he could not write so well, with such balanced understanding and humor. China taught him and he was teachable, and that in itself mean much. Real Old China Hands were fundamentally unteachable. But Carl Crow has learned and Chinese mellowness and largeness of heart enriches this book in all its pages and makes its atmosphere. Everyone ought to enjoy it.



From "Foreign Devils in the Flowery Kingdom."

SOLUTION OF LAST WEEK'S DOUBLE-CROSTIC (No. 347)

MADISON

*THE NEW CONSTITUTION**

Should a war be the result of the precarious situation of European affairs, our escape from insults and depredations, not only on the ocean but every part of the other element bordering on it, will be truly miraculous.

*("The Federalist," 1788)

Your Literary I. Q.

By Howard Collins

DUELS IN LITERATURE

On page 18 of this issue, the *SRL* reviews "Pistols at Ten Paces," which discusses some of history's famous pistol duels. Briefly described below are ten famous duels. Do you remember them? Allow 5 points for each contestant you can name. A score of 60 is par, 70 is good, 80 or better is excellent. Answers on page 18.

1. A well-placed stone, propelled by a sling, decided this contest.

2. They fought with sticks in the middle of a long, narrow bridge because neither would retreat for the other to cross.

3. So long as he kept his feet on the ground this wrestler was invincible; but he was defeated when a strong man lifted him up into the air and choked him to death.

4. Ignorant of their relationship, this father and son fought while two armies looked on, and the son was slain.

5. This cat-and-dog fight ended when the duelists ate each other up.

6. A duel between a timid, elderly knight and a frightened young lady disguised as a page was interrupted by a friend of the young lady's brother.

7. An English king, traveling incognito, fought a duel with a Scottish outlaw, and was just about to be stabbed to death when his adversary fainted from loss of blood.

8. The fight between this huge Exmoor farmer and the last of an outlaw band ended when the outlaw, his arm muscle torn out, was thrown into a bog and sank from sight.

9. The boatswain and the purser's steward were the only two wounded in this triangular duel aboard the *Harpy*.

10. In the shadowy courtyard of an inn, it took less than 200 seconds for this Tuscany marquis to dispatch the gallant young captain who had seduced his young wife.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

John D. Rockefeller

SIR:—While it may seem ungracious to take any exception to a review so complimentary and even flattering as that you have published of my "John D. Rockefeller," [*SRL*, Oct. 26] some of the statements therein are slightly misleading, and I beg leave to enter a goodnatured demurrer.

(1) It is inaccurate to say that I was "approached through Nicholas Murray Butler" or "selected over a wide field of biographers." The circumstances under which I began the book were complicated, and are of no interest to the public. It is sufficient to say that I undertook this controversial task because it seemed the best service I could perform to history at the moment; that I assumed it without any commitment, subsidy, or restraint whatever; and that the Rockefeller family did not figure any more prominently as a source of material than did several persons, families, and firms hostile to the Rockefellers.

(2) It is also inaccurate to say that I "had access to an infinite amount of material heretofore kept under cover." The Rockefeller papers could all be put in a small briefcase. The Standard Oil papers have vanished. No materials were open to me, so far as I know, that were not equally open to Mr. John T. Flynn or any other accredited investigator. It is true that I found "an infinite amount" of previously unused material. But I found it by going through distant collections like the Harper Papers and Goodspeed Papers in Chicago, and the Camden Papers in Morgantown, West Va.; by earnestly searching out a long list of Standard Oil, Tidewater Oil, Pure Oil, and other oil veterans scattered from Massachusetts to California; by careful research in the former Oil Regions of Pennsylvania; by laborious scrutiny of numerous files of newspapers; by using not only well-known but ill-known or totally forgotten reports of official investigations, and unearthing legals briefs never before scanned; and by talking and corresponding with a long list of Rockefeller's associates and subordinates in the philanthropies.

(3) The review conveys by implication, perhaps inadvertently, the impression that my book is primarily a long discussion of the ethics of Rockefeller's business enterprises. It is needless to say that I fell into no such absurdity as that. The ethical problem is not evaded, and I indicated in many places my sharp condemnation of some of Rockefeller's policies and acts. (Incidentally, the reviewer's assumption that my book is more favorable to Rockefeller than Mr. Flynn's is unfounded, as any careful reader of the two works will see. I am actually more severe than Flynn; and at some points, as in proving the Standard's bribery of legislators, I furnish more condemnatory material than Miss Tarbell.) But the ethical problem is only one facet of a huge whole, all parts of which I tried to treat objectively.

"Hey, 'Forgie,' see what you can do about freshening up the autograph in this book. And remember, the e comes before the i in Seidel."

Since the reviewer failed to do so, let me state briefly just what the book does contain. It holds the fullest history of the oil industry, from its beginnings in 1859 to 1911, yet written. It holds the only "inside" account of Rockefeller's organization of that industry into a great monopoly, written from such sources as the Rockefeller-Camden correspondence, yet published. It holds the only extended account in print of the worldwide expansion of the American oil business, and of the great battle fought after 1885 between American and Russian oil for control of the world's markets. It gives what I believe to be the fairest history of the conflict between the Oil Regions and the Standard Oil, a conflict in which all the great trunk-line railroads of the Middle Atlantic area played parts never before carefully traced. It presents in several chapters a large amount of new material on the founding of the University of Chicago and its early development. It describes with what I believe to be accuracy the management of the huge Rockefeller fortune, the investment of which has been universally misunderstood. It explains for the first time just why and how the trust idea was evolved, not invented. It contains a careful account of the titanic battle between the State and Federal governments on one side, and the Standard Oil Trust on the other; a battle in which my sympathies for the government are explicitly, emphatically, and repeatedly expressed. It deals in detail with the founding and work of the General Education Board, Rockefeller Foundation, and the Medical Institute. Naturally, it also contains a number of chapters on the personal life of John D. Rockefeller from 1839 to 1937.

I hope I may be pardoned for desiring to check any impression that I was "selected" for a task I undertook voluntarily; that I was somehow given an immense amount of material instead of having laboriously to track it down; and that I took a narrow view of a subject which involves a great part of the history of American industry, politics, and philanthropy during an eventful half-century.

ALLAN NEVINS.
Bronxville, New York.

SIR:—My authority for Point 1 is the publisher of Mr. Nevins's book.

My authority for Point 2 was Mr. Nevins's acknowledgments at the end of Volume 2.

I yield on Point 3. I am sorry if my review gave the impression that the book was primarily a long discussion of Rockefeller's business ethics, although I must admit this particular aspect of the work attracted my chief interest.

I don't think my review gave—and certainly was not intended to give—the impression that Mr. Nevins took a narrow view of the subject.

NORMAN COUSINS.

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"There Is a Tide..."

THE TIDE OF FORTUNE. By Stefan Zweig. New York: The Viking Press. 1940. 285 *pp.* $2.75.

Reviewed by WILLIAM H. CHAMBERLIN

NOT a professional historian, but a biographer who knows how to handle the materials of history, Stefan Zweig in this book gives us a series of what he calls historical miniatures. A dozen historical scenes and personalities are recreated, often with emphasis on the incalculable element of chance that so often upsets the best laid schemes of soldiers and politicians.

A classical example of sheer bad luck which Mr. Zweig retells is Napoleon's decision to entrust the pursuit of the retreating Prussians, on the eve of Waterloo, to a conscientious mediocrity named Grouchy. The distant thunder of the cannon at Waterloo did not speak loudly enough to Grouchy's imagination to make him disregard his written orders. Had he arrived at Waterloo before Bluecher came up to reinforce Wellington this battle would most probably have been remembered as one of Napoleon's victories, not as his final defeat—with results for the development of European history which can only be guessed.

The author is perhaps on less sure historical ground when he attributes the fall of Constantinople to the Turks in 1453 to the neglect of an unguarded gate. Constantinople was doomed in any case; the last stronghold of the long dying Byzantine Empire was certain to be crushed beneath the superior weight of Ottoman manpower. And, although Mr. Zweig describes the capture of Constantinople with vigor and animation, he can scarcely be said to improve on Gibbon.

By far the best and most substantial of this collection of "miniatures," in this reviewer's opinion, is the first in the series, the account of the last months of Cicero. The drama and pathos of Cicero's death as the most illustrious of the thousands of victims of the proscription decreed by Caesar's heirs, the "triumvirs," Octavius, Antony, and Lepidus, are heightened by the obvious analogies with modern times, although the author does not labor these analogies. One point that clearly emerges from Mr. Zweig's sketch of Cicero is the relative modernity of the classical man. Cicero and Thomas Mann could understand each other better than either could understand Pope Innocent III or some other representative figure of the Middle Ages.

Not all the sketches reach the sustained power and appeal of the portrait of Cicero; but practically all possess the qualities of ingenuity, entertainment, and diversity. An interesting bit of research recreates the figure of Rouget de Lisle, an obscure and mediocre poet who, in a moment of self-forgetful genius, wrote the Marseillaise—and vainly spent the rest of his life trying to live up to his reputation.

Portrait from life by Georges Schreiber

Stefan Zweig

The story of the old litigant Sutter, ruined by the gold which had been discovered on his estate, is a suitable subject for half ironical, half pathetic treatment. Two episodes of modern history which Mr. Zweig describes are Woodrow Wilson's failure at Paris and Lenin's return to Russia with the aid of the sealed train which the German High Command, in a mood of imaginative foresight, placed at his disposal.

It is interesting to speculate on what would have happened if Wilson had defied the world, including a good deal of public opinion in America, and washed his hands of the peacemaking at Versailles when it was evident that the postwar settlement was taking more account of the secret treatise than of the Fourteen Points. The Russian Revolution might well have run a different course if Lenin had remained bottled up in Zurich during its early months.

While Mr. Zweig's "miniatures" are of less substantial quality than his fullsize portraits of Mary Stuart, Marie Antoinette, and Erasmus they possess his typical literary virtues of charm in style, clarity in thought, and ability in reconstructing the outer and inner substance of past ages.

The Story of Ned Langford

WHO WALK ALONE. By Perry Burgess. New York: Henry Holt & Co. 1940. 308 *pp., with index.* $2.75.

Reviewed by CHARLTON OGBURN, JR.

IT is not often that a book takes possession of your imagination before you have read beyond the suggestion of its theme on the jacket. The story of Ned Langford is such a one. Ned Ferguson, as he called himself after having to surrender even his identity, had been a youthful volunteer in the Spanish-American War and had fought in the Philippines. Returning to his home in the Middle West, he had taken over his father's business, had fallen in love, and was about to be married. Nine years had passed. And then he awoke to the realization that something was wrong with him. Three doctors in turn were mystified. The fourth made the diagnosis. A few words were sufficient to lay his life in ruins. From that moment only one of those with whom he had shared his life in America—his brother—was he ever to see again.

For a year, under the surveillance of a specialist, he lived in New York, in an abandoned smithy, wandering the streets alone, cut off from all human contact. The major part of his narrative, however, has to do with his twenty-five years' confinement in the colony of Culion, in the Philippines, and with his bitter struggle to wrest a new life out of what remained to him, which included, happily, the friendliness of his fellow sufferers, the humanity of the administrators, the beauties of a tropic isle, and the opportunities he found to be useful.

The author, who has been an executive officer of the American Leprosy Foundation for ten years, knew Ned Langford well. Altering names and incidents only to preserve the subject's anonymity, he has written his story in the form of a novel, with Ned himself as narrator. In it, he has put much of what little is known about the disease—it is possibly the first novel ever published with an appendix, an index, and photographs. For anyone who has ever imagined himself to be lonely, it should prove both salutary and gripping. Fault could be found with some of the writing, but the story is not one to which artistry in the telling is essential. Many books have been written on the theme that "He that loseth his life shall find it." This is one that is incontrovertible.

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The Book America Wrote

EDWARD M. BRECHER

"WHEN we Americans get through with the English language," remarked the celebrated stove-league philosopher Mr. Dooley, "it'll look like it was run over by a musical comedy."

Mr. Dooley was mistaken. We Americans have been manhandling the King's English for more than three centuries, yet it now looks better than ever. American ingenuity and disrespect for hidebound tradition have immeasurably enriched our common tongue. If you doubt it, look at the evidence for yourself.

You'll find all the evidence you want, laid out in alphabetical order, from *abalone* and *absquatulate* through *guyasticutus* and *pixilated* to *wunk* and *Zu-zu,* in a mammoth new work formally titled "A Dictionary of American English on Historical Principles"* —but promptly nicknamed, in good American fashion, the D. A. E. Designed to prove that our American language has beauty, dignity, and precision as well as the musical-comedy touch Mr. Dooley noted, the D. A. E. refutes all charges that American English is a corrupt jargon.

Scholars at the University of Chicago and elsewhere have been at work on the D. A. E. since 1925. So far they have published ten of a proposed twenty parts, surveying the American language from *A* through *Honk.* They expect to reach the end of the alphabet late in 1942.

The D. A. E. is almost wholly unlike the book you use to check pronunciations, definitions, and spellings. You'll find few pronunciation marks in the D. A. E., and some stumblers which the editors frankly confess they do not know how to define. As for spellings, you'll find so many variations you will conclude that the editors, like Mark Twain, have no use for a man who only knows one way to spell a word.

In place of the usual dictionary contents, you will find quotations—thick gobs of quotations illustrating the part each word has played in American life. Instead, for example, of merely defining *democratic* as meaning "of or pertaining to democracy," the D. A. E. quotes the earliest recorded use of the word in this country, from the

*Compiled at the University of Chicago under the editorship of Sir William A. Craigie and James R. Hulbert.

Sir William A. Craigie

Rhode Island *Colonial Record* for the year 1647:

> It is agreed . . . that the forme of Government established in Providence Plantations is *Democraticall;* that is to say, a Government held by ye free and voluntarie consent of all, or the greater parte of the free Inhabitants.

By amassing more than 1,000,000 quotations like these from every conceivable American source, and selecting the best of them for publication, the editors of the D. A. E. have made it possible to reconstruct the life history of American words, and of the things to which the words refer. Under *Conestoga wagon,* for example, you will find quotations describing how those broad-wheeled *prairie schooners* were built in the Conestoga Valley of Pennsylvania; how they first hauled farm produce to Philadelphia and later ventured far into the West; how in later years they became peddlers' wagons from which Conestoga cigars, now called *stogies,* were hawked.

Like a good novel, the D. A. E. starts off with a bang. Here is the very first quotation, illustrating the letter *A* and taken from the Maine *Province and Court Record* for the year 1651:

> It is ordered that Miss Batcheller for her adultery shall . . . be branded with the letter *A.*

Clearly New England was no place to commit adultery. Actual branding passed, but in 1837 Nathaniel Hawthorne was writing in the Salem (Mass.) *Gazette* how astonished he was to find "a young woman . . . whose doom it was to wear the letter A on the breast of her gown . . . so that the capital A might have been thought to mean Admirable, or any thing rather than Adultress." The theme haunted Hawthorne for many years, until in 1850 he published his best-selling novel *The Scarlet Letter.*

Creation of an American language, the D. A. E. discloses, began as soon as the Mayflower reached Plymouth. Among the first problems which the Pilgrims faced was the parcelling out of land in the first American subdivision. They decided to cast lots for the choice pieces of ground. Thus a man's ground became his *lot.* Most Englishmen will still look puzzled if you say: "I've just bought a couple of lots on Main Street." But Miles Standish or William Bradford would have had a pretty clear notion of what you meant.

EACH part of the country similarly added to our common store of words. Pioneers picked up Indian words like wigwam, moccasin, and papoose from a hundred tribes, French words along the Canadian border and in Louisiana, Spanish words in Florida and the Southwest. By degrees these words were carried throughout the land, so that today you can hear in Maine or Minnesota many words which have migrated all the way from Mexico—*bonanza, ranch, siesta, tornado,* and *vigilante,* to name a few. Others journeyed still further — *barbecue* and *hammock* from Haiti, *chinchilla* and *tapioca* from South America. Still other words got into the American language from nowhere; like Topsy, they just grew. Witness *guyasticutus.*

The guyasticutus was—or is, for all we know—the most ferocious, rambunctious, man-eating wild animal ever exhibited under canvas to gullible Americans. For only ten cents, ladeez and gentlemen, a tenth part of a dollar, you can come into the tent and see with your own eyes this horrendous beast which consumes forty-eleven men, women, and tender babes-in-arms at a gulp, then bellows for forty-eleven more.

No one except its proprietor, alas, has ever actually seen the guyasticutus. For just when the crowd around the entrance has bought the last ticket, the proprietor rushes out of the

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tent and roars, "Run for your lives, ladeez and gentlemen! Escape before you are swallowed alive! *The guyasticutus has busted loose!*"

THE late Professor George Philip Krapp of Columbia University collected many such animals, not found in any zoo. A sort of lexicographical Frank Buck, Professor Krapp penetrated the densest jungles of American prose and brought back, though not alive, rare specimens of the *kickle-snifter,* which lives in old men's beards and circular lakes; the snowshoe-hooved *swamp gahoon;* the *joint snake,* which separates itself into many segments when you chase it, and reassembles itself after the danger is past; and the *prock,* or *side-winder,* or *side-hill badger,* whose legs are shorter on one side than on the other, enabling it to browse comfortably on the steepest mountain-sides. The prock is captured by driving it down-hill to a level spot, where its peculiar anatomy causes it to run around in circles until lassoed. Professor Krapp even succeeded in corraling the elusive *wunk,* a mole-like creature which baffles pursuers by pulling its hole in after it. Some of these beasts, now as extinct as the passenger pigeon, are preserved in the D. A. E. to show that when it comes to concocting animals, Americans are as ingenious as Nature herself.

Each episode in American history gave us an opportunity to show our verbal resourcefulness. The discovery of gold in California, for example, produced the phrases *gold rush* and *things panned out swell. Forty-niners* has been traced back as far as 1856.

Collecting quotations has kept a large staff busy for 15 years. In charge of the work is Sir William Alexander Craigie, a short, bearded Scotsman with gold-rimmed spectacles and an Ascot cravat, as scholarly in appearance as in reputation. Sir William won his academic spurs by editing a "Dictionary of the Older Scottish Tongue from the Twelfth Century to the End of the Seventeenth." He was knighted for bringing to successful completion the monumental "Oxford English Dictionary," by far the greatest dictionary of all time in any language.

Many Americans had suggested an American dictionary of the historical type, but it was the Scotch scholar who aroused sufficient enthusiasm to get the project launched, under the auspices of the University of Chicago, and with financial aid from the Rockefeller-endowed General Education Board.

The appointment of a foreigner to edit an American dictionary was not too well received by those who did not know Sir William. The Chicago *Tribune* greeted him with a headline which puzzled even the learned Oxonian:

MIDWAY SIGNS
LIMEY PROF TO
DOPE YANK TALK

Sir William's colleagues explained to him that Little Egypt had danced on Chicago's Midway during the World's Fair of 1893; thereafter amusement areas elsewhere were called midways. In Chicago, however, Midway became Chicagoese for the University which grew up on the site.

From the beginning Sir William and his American colleagues agreed that the D. A. E. was not to be a dictionary of American slang. Slang words are included only if they became established before 1875. A phrase like *holding the bag* qualifies easily; Thomas Jefferson used it in 1801.

The D. A. E. editors place major emphasis on "those features by which the English of the American colonies and the United States is distinguished from that of England and the rest of the English-speaking world." However, they have included not merely words of American origin but also "every word which has a real connection with the development of the country and the history of its people."

Preparing such a dictionary is a Herculean labor. Scores of readers must scan tens of thousands of American books, magazines, newspapers, and official records. Promising quotations are copied out on slips of paper, together with the source, page, and date. Slips are sent in from all over the country. They are checked for accuracy, sorted in alphabetical order under their key-words, and filed in cubby-holes. A careful count of slips so far collected would take at least a year—but the editors are confident that they have long since passed the million mark. When he launched the project, Sir William had estimated that 100,000 would be sufficient.

Since Sir William's return to England in 1936, Prof. James R. Hulbert has carried on, but transatlantic clippers carry final proof to the learned Scotsman for review and revision.

Amateur researchers everywhere have aided the regular D. A. E. staff by reading rare American works. Professors at many universities have set their graduate students to work, and have pitched in themselves. A New York civil engineer whose hobby is Americanisms kept himself and his office staff busy throughout the depression spotting rare quotations. The National Youth Administration helped.

A Boston amateur, the late Charles W. Ernst, made important contributions. Ernst had a phenomenal photographic memory which enabled him to call back to mind a visual image of any page he had ever read. If you asked him about such a word as *pixilated*—a word most Americans now believe was coined by a Hollywood gag-writer in 1936 to describe Gary Cooper in "Mr. Deeds Goes to Town"—Ernst would be likely to reply:

"That word has long been used among the fishermen of Marblehead, Mass., I believe. I seem to recall having seen it in print not so many years ago. You might look on page 56 of the 1887 edition of a novel called "Agnes Surriage"—about the middle of the next-to-the-last line of the left-hand page, if my memory doesn't fail me."

Sure enough, that's where you'll find *pixilated.*

Ernst died in 1925; his bulging notebooks now rest in Harvard's Widener Library. Their contents have been repeatedly consulted in preparing the D. A. E.

"The Congressional Record" is one of the most fertile sources of Americanisms. Novels, especially those written in dialect, yield many gems. Frontier newspapers are a happy hunting ground for pioneer material. Among the lushest sources are the books by Mark Twain.

TWO scholars who have counted the Americanisms in Twain's voluminous works state that there are more than 12,000 of them, and that Twain was the earliest user of 4342. He used *whoopee* half a century before Walter Winchell re-introduced it, and gave currency to such poker-game phrases as *passing the buck, four-flushing, sitting pretty,* and *new deal.* General Sherman, wrote in 1863: "Charleston is not taken, the war is prolonged, and but little chance of its ending until we have a *new deal.*"

For many of Mark Twain's Americanisms his wife deserves part of the credit. Mrs. Clemens permitted no swearing in her home or in her husband's books, so that Sam was reduced from cursing to cussing. Among the Americanisms engendered by Mrs. Clemens's taboos were *all-fired, Caesar's ghost, Great Guns, Hail Columbia, dad-blame it, dog-gone it, suffering Moses,* and a host of others. The prudery of a still earlier generation of American females gave us *light meat* and *dark meat* to get around mentioning the *breast* of a chicken; and *first and second joints* are so called, to the bafflement of English visitors, because for many years *legs,* even chicken legs, could not be mentioned in polite society.

When writers explain the words they use, dictionary compilers have an

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easy time. Often, however, words are used in a way which gives no clue to their meaning; the result is a headache for the D. A. E. editors. Witness *none-so-pretties.*

An advertisement in the Newport (R. I.) *Mercury* for March 17, 1759, announced that Jacob Richardson was having a sale at his store on certain articles called none-so-pretties. Half a century later the journal of the Lewis and Clark expedition recorded that those doughty explorers were taking with them ten none-so-pretties for trading with the Indians. But no one bothered to jot down just what a none-so-pretty was. The D. A. E. editors first guessed that none-so-pretties were "an article of haberdashery," now define them tentatively as "a kind of tape." Readers with more precise information on none-so-pretties are invited to write in. The same goes for those who can identify the *Nicholites,* a group of Southern Baptists. Just who were the Nicholites, what did they believe, and how did they come by their name?

The problem of *ash-gum* has been solved.

Dr. Mitford Mathews, brought up in a district of Alabama where many pioneer customs and folkways still survive, ended a lively debate among D. A. E. scholars. Professor Mathews's aunt, like many others, stored her ashes for soap-making in the hollowed-out trunk of a gum tree, and called it her *ash-gum.* That is how you will find *ash-gum* defined in the D. A. E.

The D. A. E. has many uses. When Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer was filming "Gone with the Wind," the question arose: Did youngsters shoot craps in New Orleans before the Civil War? In 1843, according to the D. A. E., a man named Green had written:

> The Game of Craps . . . is a game lately introduced into New Orleans, and is fully equal to faro in its . . . ruinous effects.

Impressed, M-G-M purchased a D. A. E. of its own. So typically American a word as *baseball,* however, was not invented here at all; Jane Austen used it in "Northanger Abbey" half a century before its first American appearance.

By the time the D. A. E. is completed late in 1942, it will be almost time to start over again. For while the lexicographers have been surveying our language, we ordinary Americans have been busy concocting more of it. Prohibition, the boom, the depression, and now the European war have been steadily enlarging American English; the dictionary compilers will be hard pressed to catch up. A Spanish general invented *fifth column.* Nazi Germany has given us *totalitarian* and *Blitzkrieg.* Attempts have been made to popularize a new name for traitors, *quislings,* and a new verb for treachery, *to quisle,* derived from the name of Vidkun Quisling, Norway's Benedict Arnold.

Grand-daddy among words for spy or traitor, however, is *cowboy.* This was not originally a Western word; before the days of dude ranches most cattle-herders thought of themselves as *cow-punchers,* or *cowhands,* or *buckaroos* (from the Spanish *vaqueros*). The word *cowboy* was in fact an Eastern word, used to describe George III's fifth column in the American colonies. The cowboys of those days were Tory sympathizers who wandered through the woods at night ringing cowbells. Unsuspecting American patriots, hearing the tinkle, sallied forth with lanterns in search of the straying Bossies and Bessies supposedly attached to the bells, and were promptly Blitzkrieged by enemy blunderbusses.

Words, like hats, readily succumb to changes in style. They become obsolete through the invention of newer and more stylish successors. Take the many words our ancestors used to describe a hurried departure. Our great-grandfathers *absquatulated,* as in the sentence: "I absquatulated away from that vicinity in a hurry, you can bet your bottom dollar." Our grandfathers *skedaddled* or *skidooed.* Many of us in our younger days *vamoosed.* Youngsters today simply *scram.*

Absquatulate, incidentally, illustrates our American ability to spell a word in more ways than one. With comparatively solemn faces, the D. A. E. editors list *absquatilate, absquatelate, absquotulate, absquatilize,* and *absquattle,* as in this sentence dated 1848: "Let's likker one more round and then absquattle."

Such obscure words, however, do not constitute the bulk of the D. A. E.'s contents. Many of our commonest words are also Americanisms. As Dr. Mathews has pointed out, when you get up from your *rocking chair,* button your *vest,* put on your *rubbers,* dash for the *elevator,* reach the *sidewalk,* and make a *bee-line* for the automobile which you carelessly *parked* in front of a *hydrant* when you came *downtown,* you are using words of American origin all along the way.

The Songs We Sing

A TREASURY OF AMERICAN SONG. By Olin Downes and Elie Siegmeister. New York: Howell, Soskin & Co. 1940. 351 pp., with index. $5.

Reviewed by HEINZ NORDEN

> *OUR country's strong, our country's young,*
> *And her greatest songs are still unsung,*

writes John La Touche in Earl Robinson's epic "Ballad for Americans." Olin Downes, distinguished music critic of the *New York Times,* and Elie Siegmeister, noted young American composer and head of the American Ballad Singers, have joined their considerable talents in a sumptuous, sprawling volume, proving anew that some of America's great songs have already been sung, and sung for a long time.

We learn with a flush of pride that as long as a hundred years ago some native American songbooks were sold up and down the back-country in editions running into the hundreds of thousands. From these ancient texts the authors have revived a number of vigorous tunes, tangy as New England crab-apples, American as alfalfa. Perhaps it is wrong to say that they have revived them, for they have never died. Real songs are immortal.

The authors wax almost bitter as they once more annihilate this time, let us hope, for good, the ancient canard that America has no original native folk song. The point hardly needs proving to those who have ears to hear. And as these pages prove, American folk song is rich beyond compare—in volume, quality, and, above all in variety, taking its place beside any other body of folk song in the world.

And they are all here represented wisely and lovingly chosen—the chanteys, the spirituals, the ballads, the dancing tunes, the blues—in sturdy, truly creative arrangements, simple to sing and simple to play, obviously put together by two men in whose hearts —and throats too—folk song lives. "Do not hesitate to 'worry,' embroider, or embellish the notes you see recorded. Add extra notes when needed or switch the tune around for the various verses. Let the spirit move you," writes Mr. Siegmeister, catching the fluidity that is so characteristic a part of American folk song.

The book inevitably challenges comparison with Carl Sandburg's "American Songbag," published more than a dozen years ago, and since become a classic. The Poet of the Plains emerges, on the whole, unscathed from the comparison. His volume contains more than twice the 142 songs offered

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by Downes and Siegmeister—and of these, some forty are found in the older volume. But where Sandburg sometimes, exasperatingly, gives only the unaccompanied tune, Siegmeister always gives a playable, singable rendering. His is, on the whole, the greater unity, as is to be expected in a volume steming all from one hand, unlike Sandburg's, which includes arrangements from many hands. The famous "St. James Infirmary Blues," for example, gains new vigor and freshness in Siegmeister's version. Unhappily Siegmeister, too, fails to give guitar notations, an omission for which this amateur minstrel has never been able to forgive Sandburg, the guitarist.

Of course singers and players may quarrel over certain of the Downes-Siegmeister selections. It is hard to understand, for example, why so flat a version of the beautiful "Foggy Dew" should have been picked. Workers' songs, too, seem to have been slighted, though young Woody Guthrie, the dust-bowl minstrel, is very properly represented by two of his finest, including the "Ballad of Tom Joad." On the other hand, one misses Leadbelly, the great Negro minstrel—but perhaps there were copyright reasons.

"A Treasury of American Song" is more than merely a book of music. It is a writing book too. There are some 30,000 words of text—some of it repetitious and long-winded, much of it full of interest, though one may well doubt how much of it will ever be widely read. Songbooks after all are meant to be sung rather than read. In point of fact, this strummer has learned more about songs from the ordinary twenty-five cent collections peddled far and wide than from any learned treatise.

The book is marred by minor flaws. The editing is indifferent, to say the least, with misspellings, typographical errors, and stranded footnotes. "In a myriad different forms, it is not confined to the Kentucky mountains, however," we read on page 29, to cite but one example of unkempt style. Even more annoying is the unnecessary carrying over of verses to the next page, which occasionally leaves the impression as though the book had been padded. But as a book it is well made. It stands up straight on the music rack and opens flat. It will withstand the wear and tear it ought to get. There is an index. Perhaps it is cavilling to harp upon the minor imperfections in a book that will give so much pleasure to every purchaser, and that undoubtedly will find its well-deserved way into many a Christmas stocking (it will have to be a sizable stocking —the book measures ten by thirteen inches).

Actor and Critic

HORACE WALPOLE. By R. W. Ketton-Cremer. New York: Longmans, Green & Co. 1940. 368 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by LEONARD BACON

THIS is the first good biography of Horace Walpole, and it is very good indeed. From the enormous mass of much-worked material Mr. Ketton-Cremer has succeeded in extracting the radio-active pure elements. And he has done it with such intelligence and skill that the reader will be apt to overlook the laborious research which has gone into the satisfaction of his interest. Mr. Ketton-Cremer's mind is judgmatic and penetrating, and these important qualities are to be seen in every sentence. He knows all about his fascinating subject, but he says only what is necessary to be said.

The reviewer has known Walpole's letters pretty well for twenty years, but has no hesitation in admitting that in some respects this work has modified the ideas which had formed in his mind with respect to the best correspondent in the history of English literature. For one thing it is clear that Walpole was a more important figure behind the English political scene than he himself would lead us to suppose. His own modesty, genuine or affected, has brought it to pass that it is easier to think of him as an amiable gossip exchanging items of psychological interest with Lady Howard or Madame duDeffand than as a harried go-between dashing from a petulant minister to an arrogant general, in a desperate effort to make a workable government work. He seems to have been for quite a long interval a necessary lubricant in the machinery of the tiny society which ruled the empire. And Mr. Ketton-Cremer makes it clear that for once Walpole was nearly as much an actor as a critic of the drama.

Horace Walpole

But he makes no idol of his hero. In one sentence he puts his finger on Walpole's glory and his shame, explaining at a stroke what has bewildered and fascinated even the most casual and superficial reader. "Walpole," he says, "seldom came well out of a relation in which his personal detachment was called in question." His whole merit and art was to be a spectator of what was fun to record. He loved a masquerade where safely hidden one could watch. And if by chance he was dragged into the whirlpool of action, he was as uncomfortable as his own cat drowning in the fish-bowl. Far better for him the observation-post of Strawberry Hill where he could do what he instinctively knew to be his stuff. And he resented the intrusion of any passion, love, hatred, or ambition, because they were blinding things that, at the very least made the mind myopic, if they did not cause an incurable cataract. Nevertheless, those passions were matters of intense interest and subjects of delightful speculation when viewed from a safe distance—in others. By a sort of absorption-spectrum analysis, we easily discover more than traces of those psychological elements in Walpole's remarkable alloy.

The point has been made before and will be again. There are three British writers who are classics of self-revelation. Pepys set down everything as unconscious of an audience, as if he had been a blind goldfish. Boswell in agony exposed every convolution of his soul in hopes of an audience he feared he might never get. Walpole, who knew the theatre would be thronged for his monologue (and even saw to it), preferred implication and suggestion. His withdrawals and sudden silences tell almost as much as the blunt simplicities of Pepys, or the half-conscious indiscretion of Boswell. Each of the three knows his business. And they are no more to be compared than perfect examples of different styles of architecture. Yet together they are so to say supplementary angles that complete the arc from horizon to horizon.

Mr. Ketton-Cremer has brought out his book in a time as tremendous as any of the furious decades through which Walpole passed in unexampled contemplative calm. No such book could be written on the hag-ridden continent of Europe. It takes the English to write what is pleasant, elegant, and detached as his hero hoped to be and seldom in reality was, in a world where things grow ugly, brutal, and related to nameless horror. The reviewer for one is all admiration.

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THE ECONOMICS OF AUTHORSHIP

(*Continued from page 4*)

is still with us even though top prices have come down.

For consider the history of the average writer—particularly the average fiction writer, for he is the one who has the surest and most lucrative income from the magazines. Sometimes he begins by aiming at the magazine market directly; more often he gets his start by writing a novel. His first novel is likely to be something that he had heavily on his mind, and if he has any stuff it may be pretty good. Accordingly it is likely to get good reviews; it is no longer so certain to be saluted as great as was practically every novel fifteen years ago, but the critics will at worst say that the freshness of the theme compensates for lack of sureness in the treatment. The reviews will be good and the author will believe them absolutely—except of course that he will be unable to see why anybody should have found a lack of sureness in the treatment. At any rate, he will be convinced that a bright future is opening before him. He writes another novel—like his first one, in his spare time, at night after his work at the office is over, buoyed up by youth and confidence; and if that one too gets good reviews, if it sells a little better, then the virus of an incurable disease has laid hold on him. He is an author; and it begins to appear an unendurable indignity that a writer of his quality has to appear at a desk at nine o'clock every morning and take orders from somebody else till five in the afternoon. So he quits his job, and begins to make his living as an author.

Now the chances are that for the first year or two, or three, he does pretty well. His books have created something of a stir, they may even—though this is no longer so probable as it used to be—they may even have had something of a sale; and the reputation they have earned for him has brought magazine editors around to see him. For a while he gets along very well indeed; and then one morning he wakes up to the realization that he is through, that he has said all he had to say, and that there is no more where that came from.

Now the chances are that he is not through at all, or rather that he is through only for a while. Every writer knows those recurrent periods of feeling that he will never have another idea or be able to write another line; and in the course of time he snaps out of it, after he has taken enough time off to recharge his batteries. But if he has been making good money and has spent most of it—as he probably has, for when the money is coming in it is inconceivable, to the average author, that this sort of thing may not go on forever—he finds it very difficult to take time off while the expenses are going on at the same old rate; and while magazine editors are expecting him to produce at the same rate. For what the magazine editor wants is something that will build up, or keep up, the circulation; and well-known names, well known to the readers of that magazine as well as to the general public, are the thing that is most likely to do it. Accordingly, if you sell any given magazine ten stories in a year, you will get more for each story than if you sold them only three stories a year. It may well be that three stories, three good stories, are all you have in you that year; but if your production falls off your price is likely, soon-

HOLT.HOLT.HOLT.

er or later, to fall off too. So you write your three good stories; and then you use the tricks of the trade that you have learned, and your knowledge of the tastes of the editors of that particular magazine, to knock off seven more stories that are good enough—good enough to sell with the advantage of a name well known to the magazine's readers, even though they might be sent back if they came up from Joe Blotz of Podunk Corners.

Such is the history of most writers, whether they begin with that dangerously successful novel or by writing for the magazines direct, in the hope of thereby laying up enough money to afford to write novels. Twenty years ago there were fewer pulp magazines than there are now; but some of those magazines, edited by such men as Bob Davis, Arthur Sullivant Hoffman, Kenneth Littauer, and the late Charles Agnew MacLean, were of much higher quality than any of today's pulps with perhaps one exception. In those days most writers got their start with the pulps, and in those days you could compress the history of almost any successful writer into a sentence: He wrote his best stuff for the pulps at two or three cents a word, and spent the rest of his life rewriting it for the slicks, for ten or twenty times as much money. Not so many successful writers now come up from the pulps; a man who has the peculiar talent demanded by the pulps of today is apt to go on writing for them under ten or twelve aliases. But the general principle is still true. Whereunto shall the typical author be likened? Unto an oil well, which when you first shoot it blows off uproariously—a gusher; but whose flow gradually slackens until eventually you have to pump. Much of the work seen today in the magazines under well-known names is proof that a skilful operative can keep the pump going a long time.

It may be felt that a disproportionate amount of time has been devoted to one aspect of the economics of authorship; but it is a branch of the industry that probably supports more writers than any other, and it happens to be the one with which I am most familiar. Twelve years ago, when I finished a novel, I suddenly felt that I had no more to say in that form and at that length, and several subsequent attempts to start a novel gave me no reason to change my opinion. For eleven years after that I lived on magazine fiction—mostly short fiction, with a few serials; some of it every year was good, at least as good as anything else I ever wrote; but sometimes I had to pump. Some of you may feel that I have omitted some other aspects of magazine writing—criticisms of their stereotyped formulae, their taboos and limitations. Well, I think very little of these criticisms. Perhaps it is merely my age that makes me feel that you find more good fiction in the mass-circulation magazine than in the small publications self-consciously devoted to Art; I was suckled in a creed outworn, the idea that a story should have some form and some point, and I may merely set myself down as superannuated in confessing little taste for the shapeless and pointless evocations of a mood which the art magazines are apt to give us. I do know this, however—that whatever the limitations of the mass-circulation magazines, they are all (or almost all) better than they need to be. They may try to give an immense public what the editors think it wants, but what they actually give it comes much nearer reflecting the taste of the educated and intelligent men who edit the magazine than of the average of the millions who read it. Some taboos there are, though far fewer and far less stringent than they used to be; but the only really valid and important criticism of magazine fiction is that there is too much of it. An enormous industry is hungry for fuel, it must publish more fiction than there is of good fiction; but any editor I ever met would rather publish a good story than a bad one, and is perfectly willing to break all his own taboos, once in a while, in favor of a story that is good enough.

Various high-minded persons speak with contempt of the magazines; but the magazines, like the movies, are very seldom snooted by people who are good enough to sell them something. There are exceptions; and one of them deserves notice, as a unique example of self-abnegation. Miss Margaret Mitchell, as we all know, wrote a novel that made a great deal of money. Most of that money was made in one year, and accordingly the Treasury took the greater part of it. Nevertheless Miss Mitchell was in a position to cash in on her success; she knew perfectly well, by all the canons and precedents of the literature industry, that any of the big magazines would pay her fifty thousand dollars, or maybe more, for her next serial—sight unseen, no matter what its theme or its quality. Good or bad, she could get fifty thousand for it; and for the serial after that, and so on, for at the very least ten years. But so far Miss Mitchell has not produced any serial, though four years have gone by; alone of authors of whom we have knowledge, she seems resolved not to write any more till she has something more to say. This attitude is worthy of a Nobel Prize.

The foregoing article in somewhat expanded form constituted the fifth of the Bowker lectures delivered under the auspices of the New York Public Library. The complete text appears in the Bulletin of the Library for November, 1940.

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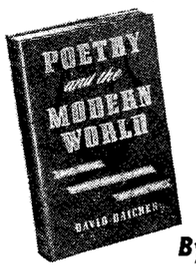

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By David Daiches

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In Old Virginia

TORCHBEARER OF THE REVOLUTION. The Story of Bacon's Rebellion and its Leader. By Thomas Jefferson Wertenbaker. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 1940. 237 *pp., with index.* $2.50.

Reviewed by H. J. ECKENRODE

COLONIAL history is generally so dull that it will come as a surprise to many readers to know that one of the most picturesque and dramatic episodes in American annals took place in Virginia as long ago as 1675. This was the first serious revolt against royal authority in the colonies, a rebellion against taxation and arbitrary government. It was led by a young man of charming personality and strong character, Nathaniel Bacon, a relative of the immortal Lord Bacon. The insurrection was characteristic of early American life, involving a cavalier governor, an Indian war, marches for distances through dense forests, a town burning, and battles in which ardor was not the less evident because the contestants were few in number. Contrasted strikingly were the splendid young tribune, burning to right the wrongs of the common people, and the testy, narrow-minded, vindictive old Sir William Berkeley, the perfect type of autocratic old age festering under the remembrance of injuries and humiliation. Bacon triumphed and then sickened and died. Victorious in the end, Berkeley eclipsed in cruelty anything else in colonial history by executing a number of the rebels and by numerous confiscations and fines. The democratic party in the colony was ruined and did not hold up its head again for ages.

Professor Wertenbaker has told this engrossing story with sound scholarship and restrained literary art. He has not added much to our knowledge of the rebellion, but that is probably because no new sources have come to light. He does bring out many facts about the family and early life of his hero.

His estimate of the situation in Virginia in 1676 is substantially correct. His view of Bacon himself may be a little too favorable. Bacon, who began the revolt as an Indian killer (whence his popularity), is not free from blame for his treatment of a tribe of friendly Indians that assisted him against hostiles; Bacon attacked and slew most of the friendlies and looted their village. The plea of necessity may be good and the facts are so obscure that it is difficult to pass judgment; but it is certain that he did not err on the side of leniency.

Persons interested in this vital chapter of our annals will find the little volume to be both instructive and fascinating.

Artistic Fabulist

FABLES FOR OUR TIME. By James Thurber. New York: Harper & Bros. 1940. 124 *pp.* $2.50.

Reviewed by FRED SCHWED, JR.

A STUDIOUS perusal of James Thurber's slim and wonderful work suggests a comparison with the "Fables" of La Fontaine which is almost inescapable. But we shall escape, because I mislaid my copy of La Fontaine back in Junior year, and besides, I have forgotten how to read French since then.

Anyway, it would not have been a fair contest, because La Fontaine was in no position to persuade Thurber to illustrate his Fables. But Thurber, the fabulist, easily engages the invaluable services of Thurber, the scratch-pad artist. These ectoplasmic figures, seemingly executed in a telephone booth between wrong numbers, enhance his Fables more dynamically than the work of any other artist could, had he had a selection from Cimabue to Margaret Bourke-White. The little figures of animals and people depict every human mood save nobility and serenity. This is no lack, since there doesn't happen to be any serenity or nobility in the Fables. On the other hand, Thurber the extra-free hand drawer, is perhaps at his magnificent best when it comes to dismay and frus-

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DUELL, SLOAN AND PEARCE, NEW YORK

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tration. It is just these qualities that the text needs, if it really needs anything much besides the Nobel Prize for Sociological Research.

These tiny stories, in which a wide variety of animals show us humans how we really are, are completely uproarious. That this is so must be placed among the many odd mysteries of risibility. Essentially, the stories are often bitter and cruel; the morals which adorn them cynical (and convulsing). They show, rather conclusively, I am afraid, that at its worst the human race is viciously silly, while at its best, it is just silly.

The last half of the book is just as good, and maybe better, than the first half. For this section, Thurber has employed a humorous device so simple and effective that it is ridiculous that in the long history of humor no one ever thought of it before. (You or I, for instance.) He merely takes a few famous nineteenth century poems, some of them pretty good poems, too, and he illustrates them literally. It is probably this tremendous literalness that hits the funny bone with such a shattering impact.

This is the sort of book which you can manage to read while leaning against the counter in a book shop. This is called "browsing" or "How to Read a Book without Paying for It." If *you* do this I hope you get eaten up by a shrike.

Fred Schwed, Jr. is the author of a humorous satire on Wall Street, "Where Are the Customers' Yachts?"

ANSWERS TO LITERARY QUIZ

1. David and Goliath, in *I Samuel xvii.*
2. Robin Hood and Little John.
3. Hercules and Antaeus.
4. "Sohrab and Rustum," in the poem by Matthew Arnold.
5. "The Gingham Dog and the Calico Cat," in the poem by Eugene Field.
6. Sir Andrew Aguecheek and Viola (Cesario), in "Twelfth Night," by Shakespeare.
7. James Fitz-James and Roderick Dhu, in "The Lady of the Lake," by Sir Walter Scott.
8. John Ridd and Carver Doone, in "Lorna Doone," by Blackmore.
9. Mr. Biggs and Mr. Easthupp, in "Mr. Midshipman Easy," by Frederick Marryat.
10. Don Luis Sotoymer y O'Connell and Denis Moore, in "Anthony Adverse," by Hervey Allen.

Honorable Murder

PISTOLS AT TEN PACES. The Story of the Code of Honor in America. By William Oliver Stevens. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1940. 293 *pp.* $3.

Reviewed by ALBERT NEVILLE

THE duel is equally of interest to the sociologist, the historian, and the student of jurisprudence; and it is the great merit of Mr. Stevens's book that he treats American duelling in a scientific spirit. He deals with it as an institution, not a series of episodes. The rise, flowering, and rapid decline of duelling in this country, all within about eighty years, is a subject of no little significance. In colonial days resort to the code of honor was almost unknown. But during the Revolution French and British officers (particularly French) popularized duelling, and within a few decades more encounters were taking place in America, and more lives being sacrified, than in any other land. Mr. Stevens describes the practice at its apogee about 1850 as "the most ruthless murder cult ever known," and the facts justify him. At certain times and places, especially before laws against libel and slander were made effective, duelling possessed some utility. De Quincey speaks of it as a vestige of the age of chivalry which performed important functions "through the sense of instant personal accountability which it diffused universally amongst gentlemen"; and Thomas Hart Benton doubtless had this sensitiveness to honor in mind when he wrote of the Clay-Randolph duel as "high-toned." But the American tendency toward individualism and violence made duelling a peculiarly dangerous institution for our soil. As it became clear that most duels were a ghastly farce as a substitute for law-courts, and that many of them were sheer murder, public sentiment—stimulated by district attorneys, enlightened editors, and in time masters of ridicule like Mark Twain—cut duelling short. This was soon after the Civil War, which ended a number of other vestiges of the age of "chivalry."

Though Mr. Stevens's treatment is for the most part chronological, he marshals a good many of his duels under topical headings. They include the army and navy duel, with a separate chapter for the appalling Decatur-Barron encounter in 1820; the political duel,

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exemplified by Hamilton and Burr, the Congressional duel; the "grudge fight"; the Far Western duel; and "plain killing." It is rather strange that journalists do not get a separate division, for editors were always being called out by irate citizens. But nearly every important duel of American history is here, accurately and spiritedly narrated; the only exception noted by the reviewer is the duel fought by Pierre Soulé, our minister to Spain, and that took place on foreign soil. Many curious facts are brought out, and many horrible stories are told; the most repulsive being the history of Alexander K. McClung, the "Black Knight" of Mississippi, who slew seven men in one family. Bloody Island in the Mississippi near St. Louis, and Dueling Island near Vicksburg, became filled with graves. It is to be wished that Mr. Stevens had gone more fully into the rather complex group of forces which made duelling as much an anachronism as the medieval tournament. But he has written a useful as well as entertaining book, embodying a dark page in the general history of American civilization.

The Time Is Now

ZERO HOUR: A Summons to the Free. By Stephen Vincent Benét, Erika Mann, McGeorge Bundy, William L. White, Garret Underhill, Walter Millis. New York: Farrar & Rinehart. 1940. 244 *pp.* $1.

Reviewed by HENRY B. KRANZ

SIX authors have united to shout and shake America's conscience awake. They come from various states in the union; one author even came from a foreign country, but they all have this in common: "They all acknowledge a crisis, and a crisis that must be met . . . not next week, not tomorrow, but now . . . They acknowledge a faith . . . that free men working together can maintain the great shape of democracy," as Mr. Benét says in the introductory chapter.

Varied as are the angles from which the authors view the difficult decision with which America is faced today, they also have this in common: they reject any sort of appeasement and have reached the conclusion that there is probably no remedy against war but war. "If war can only be fought by making war upon it, then I am prepared to make war upon it," says Walter Millis. All of them also see a very gloomy future if at the last hour America does not create that unity which convinces every man that he must be prepared "to fight if need be, to die if they must."

Erika Mann warns us, "Don't Make the Same Mistakes," in a chapter which is substantially a report of her conversation on a railroad train with a young American. She tells the young man that no "Maginot Ocean" can save America if it does not learn from the mistakes that were made in Europe. "Act; This is your final hour, the zero hour."

William L. White, the well-known foreign correspondent, in "I Saw It Happen," gives a fascinating account of his experiences in Germany and Finland. He learned something important in Europe: "That democracy is not a substitute for determination and brains. These are what the European democracies lacked—and there they are. If we are to survive (and we are going to) we must quit being as stupid and as greedily soft as they were."

In the final chapter, "The Faith of an American," Walter Millis analyzes the point of view of his generation, which was dubbed "The Lost Generation." It was thoroughly disillusioned in 1918 and soon discovered "the speeches and flag-waving had been meaningless." Everyone who, like Mr. Millis, loathed war, was faced with a dilemma. He solves it by asserting, "War is society . . . War is society in action . . . There are still times when any social organization must be willing to fight unless it is to die."

A book of this sort need no special recommendation. Let us hope it will soon attain the position it deserves as a cross-section of the philosophies of six honest, hot-blooded, convinced modern Americans who hate war yet see it moving steadily closer.

LABOR POLITICIAN

(*Continued from page* 7)

As so often happens with the characters in long political or historical novels, Hamer is a number of personal episodes rather than a person. He might have been conceived by Arnold Bennett in a very tired mood; there is something about him that is second-hand. But then the novel itself is not organic; like Mr. Spring's earlier success, "My Son, My Son," it consists of a series of crises which do not pile up one upon another, or move spirally, but are like a succession of volcanic bumps along a level plain. The characters *intrude*—often in the most lively manner—but do not *grow* upon the reader's mind: with one notable exception. Mr. Spring shows us the parallel development in two lives, two men who grew up in the same town. One is Shawcross; the other Arnold Reyerson—less gifted, infinitely more honest, a man who went from Manchester to work among the miners of South Wales, and who died in poverty. Mr. Spring has put all his imagination and his emotion into the character of Arnold Ryerson, so much so that one could wish that the novel had been centred about Arnold alone.

One has to admit, however, that, beside the mere energy of good story-telling, another and more obscure force can be discerned in "Fame Is the Spur." The novel is a complaint against the past. With this extrinsic force to give it momentum, "Fame Is the Spur" becomes something more than just a piece of competent writing. It rather looks as if Mr. Spring had another success on his hands.

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THE NEW BOOKS

Biography

DO NOT DISTURB. By Frank Case. Illustrated by Soglow. Stokes. 1940. 322 *pp., with index.* $3.

Frank Case, proprietor of the Hotel Algonquin, continues in "Do Not Disturb" his merry chat about the celebrated people who frequent his 44th Street branch of the Mermaid Tavern. Although the conversation is not quite so lively, nor the recollections so random as in Mr. Case's earlier book, he has again provided a liberal supply of anecdotes in which Names are named, and has shown himself better than able to match wits with his customers. A good deal of talk about hotel-keeping is thrown in with the friendly gossip, and frequently these professional comments of Mr. Case's are even more interesting than the stories he has to tell. One section in particular combines the best features of both: a list of replies to a questionnaire on food preferences which Mr. Case sent out to a number of his patrons. Finding out what anyone likes to eat is always, for some reason, fascinating. It is even better to find out what Lillian Gish and Gene Markey and Lewis Gannett and Joan Crawford like to eat. (More people dislike parsnips than anything else.) Occasionally Mr. Case complains of the complexities and difficulties a hotel-keeper has to face, but serious as these are there is no doubt that the host of the Algonquin finds that "the duties are delightful and the privileges great." Certainly his book conveys his pleasure in his lot, and it will therefore please his readers: those he knows, who look to see if they are mentioned and correctly credited; those he doesn't know, who want to share his delighted intimacy with those he knows.

F. S.

Fiction

THE HILL IS MINE. By Maurice Walsh. Stokes. 1940. 355 *pp.* $2.50.

Mr. Walsh's tales are best described as swaggering romances, garnished with deft touches of banter in mellow old literary vein and with sudden swirls of dark passion, also in mellow old literary vein. His characters, once set up, move of their own accord just as though they were alive. They know what to do and what to say, how to toss their shaggy heads, dash through the heather, swear rueful love, and strike hot blows. And if we seem to be saying that they aren't real at all we should add that if you don't mind that you will find them very entertaining. Mr. Walsh is spinning a yarn about a Montana cowboy who comes into possession of a small estate in Scotland. Put horsey Steve Wayne in a heathery glen, add one mercurial Scot named Kenny Alpin, a latter-day Mercutio, and three varied and troubling Scottish beauties, and some old Scottish feuds, and you have the stuff for a bright and flippant adventure. Such is "The Hill Is Mine," latest in a series of romances which have raised Mr. Walsh to eminence in his field.

N. L. R.

SLAVA BOHU. By J. F. C. Wright. Farrar & Rinehart. 1940. 438 *pp.* $3.50.

Slava Bohu—which means Praise God—is the phrase of greeting and farewell among the Dukhobors, a religious sect that originated in Caucasia in the seventeenth century. Like the Mennonites in their refusal to recognize civil authority, and like Quakers in their opposition to military service, the Dukhobors naturally were a cause of ceaseless trouble to the Czars. In the Wet Mountains of Southern Russia their tribes flourished for a time despite the weirdness of their ways, but in the nineteenth century, some of

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Title and Author	*Crime, Place, and Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
TURN OF THE TABLE *Jonathan Stagge* (Crime Club: $2.)	Table-tipping soiree in jittery American household ends in mysterious poisoning. Doctor guest lends Insp. Cobb assistance of questionable value.	Evidences of lycanthropy, dark family secrets, an amusing child, and fearsome finish are features of melodramatic and highly-tensioned tale.	Satisfactory
THE GREAT MISTAKE *Mary Roberts Rinehart* (Farrar & Rinehart: $2.)	Tragedy hits household of wealthy widow when ex-husband of friend is conked and drowned. Coterie of local cops solve it.	Continuously exciting entertainment, slightly marred by extra length and considerable amount of "had-I-but-known-ing."	Well worthwhile
THE WRONG MURDER *Craig Rice* (Simon & Schuster: $2.)	Shooting of shabby little man midst Chicago Christmas shoppers speeds Jake Justus and Helene Brand to ecstatic heights of sleuthing.	Prevalence of bibulous humor and rowdy happenings should not obscure good detecting and an excellent worked out plot.	High voltage
LAST TRAIN OUT *E. Phillips Oppenheim* (Little, Brown: $2.)	Extraction of art-treasures from eve-of-war Vienna managed with much éclat and some violence by clever and unruffled Englishman.	Build-up handled in very best Oppenheim manner. Climax on cheap side, but by that time reader won't mind-much.	Intriggin

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the Dukhobor leaders were arrested, and eventually shipped off to Siberia. As loyal members continued to refuse to consent to military service of any sort, life under the Czars became increasingly difficult, and eventually the sect migrated in great numbers to Western Canada where some 17,000 of them now live amidst poverty and ignorance. In some of their leaders they had remarkable good fortune. Peter Verigin, a strong, intelligent, devout leader, the most noteworthy of them, is the central character in Mr. Wright's story.

J. F. C. Wright, a Canadian newspaper man, spent several years in Saskatchewan and British Columbia studying these unique people. He has reconstructed the story of their struggles from the time of the early days in Russia to the present. He has written a historical novel, but he has allowed facts and dates to burden his tale to such an extent that the work lacks the sweep and suspense that should distinguish a novel. With few sources in writing, the author was forced to depend heavily upon folklore. He has told his story of the Dukhobors with great care and with sympathy. Otherwise the reader might have less interest in their fate than even these misled people deserve.

C. K.

THEY DON'T DANCE MUCH. By James Ross. Houghton Mifflin. 1940. 296 *pp.* $2.50.

Anyone who likes his murders and assaults ghastly and his immoralities frequent and vigorous can't do better for his money than this enchanting idyll of a Carolina roadhouse and cabin camp. While the book is seldom as explicit as some of Mr. Faulkner's more celebrated passages, it is sufficiently descriptive for the average stomach; lovers of bourbon whiskey are warned against passages dealing with the disposal of the top-billing corpse; the matter of the corpse's production roughly follows Shakespeare and the royal princes in the Tower. It is strong enough for us.

The book is not a mere chamber of horrors and ribaldries, however. The grim success story of the roadhouse proprietor creates, if not any factitious sympathy, at least considerable and consistent suspense about the resolution of the man's career. The final episode of his brutal progress "from the bottom over everyone on top," as he puts it, is brought about by the mean counter-plotting of his confederate in murder, who is strong only in his desire for his share of the profits of the crime and his indignation when they are withheld.

There are a good many loose ends in the book, but they are amusing loose ends.

In spite of these irrelevant tags of detail the book has drive and power and an artistic and truly haunting aura of savagery and some horror.

P. S.

Author! Author!

HERMANN RAUSCHNING has completed, frequently working in bomb and air-raid shelters in London, the manuscript of a new book which is a continuation of his "The Revolution of Nihilism." The manuscript has arrived by Clipper from London and will be rushed to press as soon as the English translation is completed. The book deals with recent events and is written in simpler language than the first work. . . . The life of William Allen White will be the subject of a movie produced by M.G.M.

★ ★

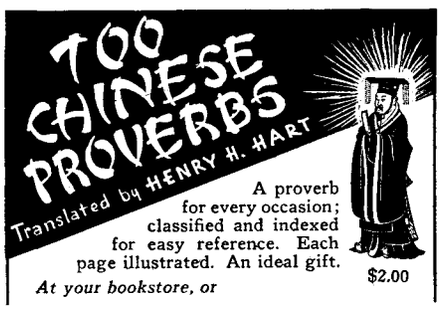
Kenneth Roberts ("Northwest Passage," "Oliver Wiswell") has developed a sudden and pretty thorough interest in tropical fish. Last weekend he acquired an 18-gallon tank, a heater, lighting apparatus, and other paraphernalia. And, of course, a couple of dozen tropical fish. Unfortunately six of them proceeded to die and the author had to devise an implement, made of an old fishing pole and a pin, to get them out, since, contrary to custom, the fish sank to the bottom of the tank. Mr. Roberts has added fifty acres to his place in Kennebunkport, Maine, and is clearing it. He takes time off from agonizing over the tropical fish to chop down trees by the dozen. . . . Katherine Anne Porter ("Flowering Judas") is in New York. Her ardent fans will be delighted that she is now doing the final revisions on the first full-length novel she has completed. It will appear in the spring. Miss Porter will be on the "Invitation to Learning" broadcast during the first week in December—she will discuss "Moll Flanders."

★ ★

Philip Atlee, whose novel, "The Inheritors," is laid in Fort Worth, Texas, has been getting letters from irate Texans, some warning him to stay in New York, others daring him to come back to Fort Worth. Mr. Atlee is working on a new novel and hasn't decided which offer he'll take up. . . . Christina Stead drew a portrait of her husband, William Blake ("The World Is Mine," "The Painter and the Lady") in one of the characters of her last novel, "House of All Nations;" it's rumored that she has put herself into her new book, "The Man Who Loved Children." . . . Ellen Glasgow has been in New York to deliver the manuscript of her first new novel in five years. It has no title as yet, but it's a contemporary story laid in Virginia.

★ ★

Richard Johns, short-story writer and one-time editor of *Pagany,* one of the most famous of the "Little magazines" of the Thirties, has two books dedicated to him this season, William Carlos Williams's novel, "In the Money," and a mystery story, "Hush, Gabriel," by his wife, Veronica Parker Johns. . . . Margery Sharp ("The Stone of Chastity") is doing First Aid in England and keeping up her writing in Crooklets, Bude, Cornwall. Her war work has developed an odd twist: she gives a great deal of blood for transfusions, because "my blood is the most useful sort of all—transfuses into any other kind." EUGENE ARMFIELD.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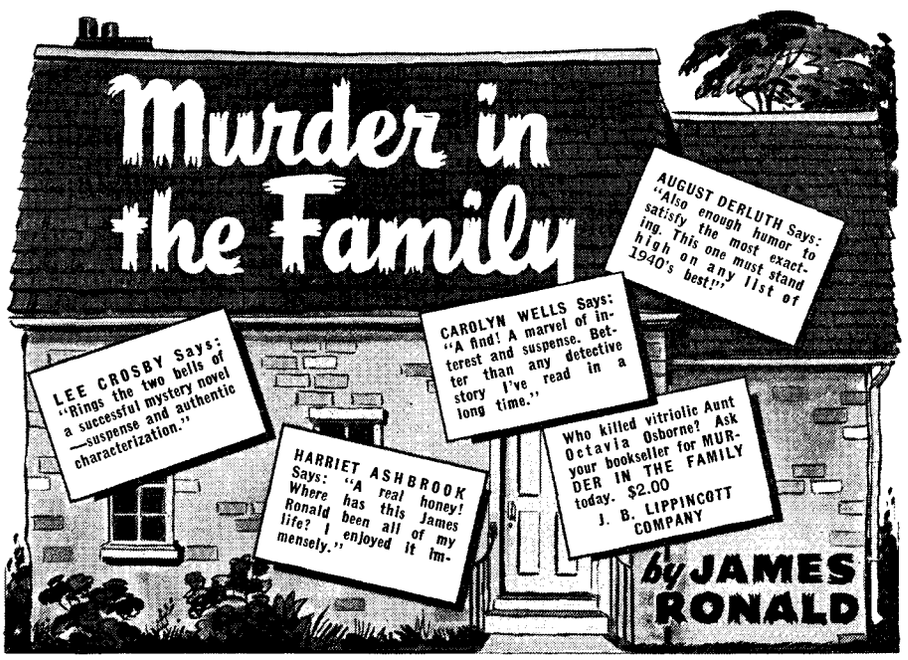
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Double-Crostics: No. 348

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

■	■	1-Q	2-N	3-D	■	4-Y	5-F	6-B	■	7-N	8-H	9-M	10-A	■	11-B	12-D
13-E	14-K	■	15-G	16-H	17-C	18-S	■	19-U	20-I	21-N	22-D	■	23-V	24-G	25-O	26-H
■	27-N	28-Q	29-L	■	30-I	31-M	32-O	33-C	■	34-Q	35-A	■	36-D	37-B	38-E	39-A
■	40-W	41-G	42-O	43-I	44-Y	■	45-G	46-K	47-L	48-V	■	49-W	50-E	51-J	■	52-V
53-J	54-D	55-L	56-X	■	57-W	58-H	59-V	60-B	61-Y	■	62-C	63-L	■	64-A	65-D	66-S
■	67-D	68-R	■	69-H	70-G	71-D	■	72-M	73-C	■	74-X	75-V	76-E	■	77-Q	78-M
79-S	80-L	■	81-L	82-K	83-O	84-U	■	85-N	86-S	87-J	88-Y	89-K	90-U	91-G	92-C	■
93-A	94-R	95-M	■	96-J	97-M	98-F	99-V	100-T	101-P	102-U	103-K	104-R	■	105-H	106-N	107-T
■	108-Y	109-E	110-I	111-K	112-G	113-T	■	114-F	115-U	116-C	117-J	118-G	■	119-A	120-Q	121-L
■	122-W	123-J	124-R	125-G	126-I	127-U	128-P	■	129-K	130-I	131-Y	132-L	■	133-S	134-F	135-B
■	136-I	137-Y	138-R	139-C	140-V	141-T	■	142-E	143-J	144-F	■	145-V	146-L	147-M	148-A	■
149-H	150-D	151-Y	152-K	153-J	154-U	■	155-C	156-W	157-A	158-E	159-I	160-X	161-P	■	162-S	163-U
164-I	165-L	166-A	■	167-W	168-C	169-P	170-X	171-S	172-U	173-N	■	174-V	175-O	176-R	177-C	■
178-D	179-L	■	180-S	181-N	182-Q	183-K	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words; therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary (1938 edition).

The solution of last week's *Double Crostic* will be found on page 8 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Dry grapes.

B. King of England (1100-1135).

C. Twists and turns (3 wds.)

D. Slender of understanding (comp.)

E. Circumscribed; detached.

F. Scotch city of a "Fair Maid" (Scott).

G. Winged; fleet.

H. Treaty of 1697 (French and English).

I. Envelop.

J. Cross in the constellation Cygnus.

K. Daughter of Henry VIII.

L. Alchemy (hist.) (3 wds.)

M. Castle of "Mysteries" by Mrs. Radcliffe (1794).

N. English poetess (1764-1834); *(The riddle of the letter H).*

O. Chief gods of Scandinavian pantheon.

P. For fear that.

Q. Hard precious stone used in Solomon's temple.

R. Cycle of nine gods (Eg.)

S. Shiny-scaled blind worm.

T. Monetary unit of Japan (pl.)

U. Boisterous dance.

V. Retaliation (3 wds.)

W. Follows as a consequence.

X. The smith aiding [*The Ring*] Siegfried.

Y. Scene of slaughter.

WORDS

A.	157	93	35	39	148	10	64	119	166	
B.	37	60	6	11	135					
C.	62	73	155	168	92	177	17	116	33	139
D.	65	54	150	178	67	12	22	36	71	3
E.	38	76	13	50	109	142	158			
F.	98	5	114	144	134					
G.	15	70	41	45	24	91	125	112	118	
H.	16	26	69	105	8	149	58			
I.	164	126	30	136	159	110	43	20	130	
J.	117	96	143	123	53	153	87	51		
K.	14	152	82	111	89	129	103	183	46	
L.	47	81	80	179	63	146	121	165	132	29 55
M.	78	95	72	9	97	31	147			
N.	85	27	2	173	106	21	7	181		
O.	32	25	83	175	42					
P.	128	161	101	169						
Q.	182	120	1	77	34	28				
R.	68	94	176	124	138	104				
S.	79	66	86	162	133	171	180	18		
T.	107	100	141	113						
U.	102	163	127	90	84	154	115	19	172	
V.	23	59	52	174	140	99	48	75	145	
W.	40	167	57	156	122	49				
X.	74	170	160	56						
Y.	88	44	131	4	108	151	137	61		

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TRADE WINDS

P. E. G. QUERCUS ASSOCIATES *

ONE of the *SRL* editors flew out to Chicago recently to talk before a Women's Club. The plane hit into a gale above the Chicago airport and was buffeted around the first few times it attempted a landing. The going was a little too rough for our editor, who, after the plane had spent half-an-hour above the field, signaled the stewardess for a captain's report. The signals were apparently misunderstood, for the stewardess brought forth a newspaper which, when unfolded by the uncomfortable editor, read: "Ten Killed in Air Crash!"

★ ★

☞Old Q. is puzzled by the sudden popularity, outside book circles, of the name of this column. As far as he has been able to ascertain, one song, two dances, and three restaurants have been named after "Trade Winds."

★ ★

☞Bon Marche and Bullocks, of Seattle and Los Angeles respectively, have now been added to the growing list of *SRL* depots. ☞The witty fables in "The Cat's Cradle Book," by Sylvia Townsend Warner, make just the book for roaring fire reading these applejack days. ☞The alliteration advertising boys who have been pushing the Willkie campaign are still at it. Some of the stores are now selling new Willkie buttons with the slogan "We Still Want Willkie."

★ ★

☞The ABC has learned its *SRL*. And last week our proud circulation manager had this little insignia tatooed upon his chest:

ABC

☞The Audit Bureau of Circulation is accountant, bailiff, and cop all rolled into one. A circulation that stands its fierce examination will be grasped, we are told, by the most cynical advertiser. The *SRL* came off with a net paid circulation of 28,188 for the audit year ending June 30, 1940. ☞A sociologist might draw some interesting conclusions from the Bureau's analyses. Forty-four per cent of our readers are in cities of 100,000 or more population. Fifty-six per cent in smaller cities and towns. (Nine per cent of the *SRL's* subscribers have made their way to it from towns of less than 1,000 people.) ☞Nevada is low-man with only 23 subscribers. North Dakota, once our smallest spot, has taken hold of itself in admirable fashion and now has 42 subscribers. Delaware, a thickly populated little state on the rich eastern seaboard, surprises us with only 60 subscribers. (Come on, du Ponts!) And New York leads with 4,211. ☞Foreign nations, with graver things than literature to think about, take 281 copies; Canada, 326; and the U. S. Territories 157. Most pleasant of all, we have 25 readers who came from Miscellaneous—the place where Old Q. is vacationing.

★ ★

☞Editors are primarily merchandising men. The large number of books dealing with the draft and preparedness have found most of the publishers on their toes in going after the 17,000,000 men in this country who are between the ages of 21 and 36. If there is a publisher who doesn't have a title that fits in this category or isn't preparing one, Old Q.'s Associates would like to know his name. ☞We've never seen so many interesting and colorful children's books as have been published this Fall. ☞Oxford University Press has now added in its Phaidon Press Edition another title in this amazing art series—*The Paintings of El Greco*. This series is beautifully printed and costs very little—$3.00.

★ ★

☞We doff our collective hats to the publishing enterprise of Macmillan in making available to the public Frazer's *The Golden Bough* at $1.49. If this sounds like an advertisement we're glad. Run—not walk, to your local bookstore, etc. . . . ☞*Current History and Forum* is publishing letters from England in a book to be edited by Mrs. Vincent Sheean and Roger Straus, Jr.

★ ★

☞Old Q. recently mentioned in this column the work of the Brazilian artist, Portinari. He is now informed that the University of Chicago Press is publishing a book called *Portinari: His Life and Art,* containing eight reproductions of Portinari's work in full color, and 100 in black-and-white. The introduction is by Rockwell Kent. ☞A book to gladden the hearts of the Associates is the Heritage Press edition of John Steinbeck's *Grapes of Wrath,* with illustrations by Thomas Benton. Put this down on two lists: (a) the most beautiful books of the year; (b) books to give for Xmas.

*[*Editor's Note: This is the first effort of Old Q.'s Associates as pinch-hitters while the Bearded One is on vacation. Being a little rusty—it is a year since they have been called from the dugout—they should perhaps be excused if they have been a little too chesty in several parts of this column concerning their own spheres of operation on the magazine.*]

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